

# EDINBURGH CHAMBERS' JOURNAL

CONDUCTED BY WILLIAM CHAMBERS, AUTHOR OF "THE BOOK OF SCOTLAND," &c., AND BY ROBERT CHAMBERS, AUTHOR OF "TRADITIONS OF EDINBURGH," "PICTURE OF SCOTLAND," &c.

No. 124.

SATURDAY, JUNE 14, 1834.

PRICE THREE HALFPENCE.

## BOB SHILLINGLAW.

THE College of Justice in Scotland, like every other numerous public body, however respectable, at all times comprehends a number of individuals who rather make it the source of any little honour they can boast of, than confer any honour upon it. This body, I may mention for the sake of distant readers, is that which administers the law in the Scottish capital, embracing judges, barristers, and agents of various kinds; most of whom live in a highly reputable manner, forming the mass of that polished and informed society for which Edinburgh is celebrated, while a few, as hinted, are by no means qualified to give it any additional lustre. About twenty years ago, the Parliament House, where the court sits, and where, during session, thousands of lawyers, law-agents, and litigants, daily assemble, did not show a redder nose, or a better known physiognomy in general, than that of Bob Shillinglaw. Bob was the very pink and pick of all low practitioners. His short neat stock—his yellowish cravat—his threadbare coat buttoned up to the chin—his shabby hat, endeavouring to make up for its shabbiness by the smartness of its cock—all betokened the man who would have, in the words of Robert Fergusson, the

—“weightiest matters covenanted,  
Over half a gill.”

Bob, in the Edinburgh Directory, entitled himself solicitor; and it was generally allowed by those who knew any thing about him, that he had abilities of nearly the first order, and might have shone in his profession, if he had only possessed a fair share of steadiness. But Bob was one of those people, who, from first to last, seem to regard life as a mere frolic, and set themselves to enjoy it accordingly. The laird of Macfarlane's geese did not display a more marked preference for play over work, than he did. He was, from his youth up, a devotee to fun. He could sing a good song, tell a merry tale, and mimic every judge on the bench, besides the most of the advocates, before he had been a twelvemonth gone in his apprenticeship. Ere he could reckon eighteen years, he belonged to as many clubs, not to speak of a volunteer corps of sharpshooters, in which he enjoyed the honourable situation of corporal. No boon-companion was held in more affection than Bob. The moment he appeared in a mason-lodge, he was hailed with almost a shout of applause; and happy was he who got Brother Shillinglaw to sit beside him. Bob perhaps would hardly say a word for ten minutes; yet every body would think he had been amazingly amusing. The truth is, Bob was so well known as a droll fellow—he had so much credit in that capacity—that people were just as much pleased with the expectation of his saying something good, as if he had already said it. If he pronounced the most ordinary sentence, they suspected something under it, and laughed accordingly, hoping to see the joke by and bye. Then his nose had an infinitely funny way of twitching itself about—whether with the will of its owner or not, we cannot say; but certain it is, that few witticisms are so successful in the production of laughter as was Bob's nose in the presence of a hearty company. If he blew it, the cackinnation was immense—there was no standing that. The sound might have toppled a whole theatre over into convulsions. Then his eye—its every twinkle was a wag-gery. He could make one keep quite open, while the other went half shut, and men absolutely howled with mirth. If he suddenly changed that burlesque look into a certain indescribable squint, they rolled on the floor. He could not even scratch his head, in however unpremeditated a manner, or however unconsciously, but it was believed he meant something, and

would receive the appropriate congratulation of a roar.

It may readily be supposed that a person so characterised, however trusted in the matter of wit, was not apt to be equally trusted in the way of business. In truth, he had no credit in that particular. “Capital fellow, Bob!” every body would say, at the very time they were putting their cases into the hands of duller men, and less beloved. The poor fellow was also so unlucky as to have the good fortune of living with a widowed mother who enjoyed a small annuity. He never had seen any particular reason for applying himself to business. He had bed and board at his mother's, and what more was required but a few shillings to keep his pocket? The old lady was infinitely fond of her son. “It's pleasant,” she would say, “to have a man-body about the house.” She had also a high opinion of his talents, without having ever seen any pressing reason for his exerting them. “Robert is rather wild,” thus would run her reflections, “but he's a fine chield for a' that. He's but young, and will come on by and bye.” In fact, Bob had been in some measure spoilt in this quarter. It was a redeeming trait, however, in his character, that he displayed an unfailing attachment to his aged parent. He must have been very drunk indeed on any Saturday night, to be disabled for conducting her to church next day. And though she had many eccentricities, some of which were of a disagreeable character, his patient affection was never known to give way.

Though Bob did not obtain much business of a lucrative kind, it must not be supposed that he was altogether unemployed. Far from it—he was constantly embroiled in a multitude of poverty-struck causes, which no one but a good-natured and dissipated fellow like himself would have been troubled with. He had no office, distinctly so called—though we believe his mother had an apartment set aside in her house in Chessel's Court, which she ceremoniously called “Robert's room,” and which contained a kind of desk, with a few papers strewed over its surface. He was ready for business any where. Very generally, it was executed in obscure public houses, or in the city jails, where a great proportion of his clients usually resided. Bob had a kind of instinctive hatred of the name of creditor, and seemed willing at any time to fight on the debtor's side, out of pure amateurship. He thus became agent for a large proportion of the cases of *cessio bonorum* which passed through the court. Some poor man, keeping a small tavern, and overburdened with debts, would fall in with Bob, and, in their social moments, make inquiry as to the expenses of carrying through this particular kind of action. Bob, with a glibness manifesting his intense familiarity with the subject, would reckon up the various items, exclusive of all consideration for his own trouble; and it would then be decided that the process should be commenced—a preliminary step being the confinement of the debtor for thirty days in one of the jails. *Cessio bonorum* means literally a surrendering of goods; but it is rarely resorted to when there are any goods to be surrendered; and its real meaning is, a clearing off of all engagements by virtue of the mercy of the law. In all the stages of this process, Bob was ready to stand agent and friend. His reward was rarely in coin; but he almost always contrived to get more or less of meat and drink out of the business. The truth is, Bob did not like particular fees. He rejoiced in a client who, though possessing little spare money, had nevertheless a tolerably rough house in the way of victuals and liquor. He liked to have a few open doors throughout the town, into which he could pop at any time in

an easy way, with the assurance of a welcome to whatever was going. His professional labours were understood in such cases to be altogether in the way of friendship. He conducted the plea upon a kind of tacit understanding that, during the whole time of its dependence, he could not enter the house at noon without a lunch and a dram, nor at night without a supper and a tumbler. The lawyer kept no account of the scribbles, and the client kept no account of the dribblings, and thus they were quits. And so Bob moved on through life. He would breakfast in one house upon a *cessio bonorum*, dine in another upon a charge of horning, and have a roaring night-debauch in a third on the strength of a writ of ejectment. He also liked to have a client or two about Musselburgh, for it was so pleasant to take a walk thither on a summer Saturday with a friend, and, after a game at golf on the links, make an infall upon the unfortunate litigant, whose house, of course, with all that it contained, was for the time at his command. It was generally believed that Bob contrived to make rather more of these kitchen fees than he could have made of any other: some even said that the expenses, paid in regular coin of the realm to an agent of more solid repute, would have been lighter by one-half. But then, as the collier boy said, “wha has ever ony siller in the middle o' the owk?” The few who are so fortunate as to possess ready money may take advantage of it; but the poor must just be doing with what they have. Bob's exorbitancy of mouth was simply one of the taxes imposed, in obedience to the current of things, upon poverty; and while these are so numerous and so heavy, it is hardly worth while to declaim about a particular one, flagrant as it may appear. Besides, it must always be kept in mind, that where there was utter sapless poverty, Bob was never disposed to be an oppressor. He was not one of those who, like Hearne the hunter, milk the kine till the blood comes. He was as well content to share in the cup of ale and the twopenny loaf of the poor prisoner, as to act the *sluan* in dwellings better provisioned. And at the very worst, if he had any coin himself, he was not unwilling to spend it in treating a client who had nothing wherewith to treat himself.

Bob was a man whom custom had rendered familiar with every kind of misfortune. Though naturally cursed, therefore, with the utmost goodness of heart, he did not usually exhibit any great external show of sympathy for those whom he saw in distress. A struggling tradesman, whom he had long counselled in the arts of evading pecuniary difficulties, would at last write to him from the Old Tolbooth, mentioning that he had just been put in for “that bill of Hardie's,” and would like to see him immediately. Bob, without losing a moment, would fly to the apartment of his friend, who, being new to the squalor and disgrace of the situation, would be sitting with his head upon his hand, and his elbow on the deal table, apparently in no very pleasant mood of mind. In Bob would plunge, with his hearty breath and loud salutation, disturbing the dream of the prisoner, turned homeward upon wife and children. The prisoner might be never so dejected about his situation; but Bob never could see any thing in it that was in the least out of the way. Then he was so full of instances of men who had never done any good till after they had proved bankrupt—one would have supposed from his discourse, that he believed there was something in the air of a jail positively favourable to prosperity. By and bye, the wife would come in, with her eldest daughter, bearing a little bundle of necessities; a modest and dejected pair, who, as yet unused to the

severer horrors of adversity, had, from a motive of delicacy, put off their visit till nightfall, so that they might not be observed entering a prison. The distress of both females at seeing a husband and parent brought to so dire a disgrace, might be never so great: it would only elicit a smile from Bob Shillinglaw. "Ay, ay, pair things," he would say aside to some one as experienced in hardship as himself, "they aye tak it a wee to heart the first time."

Bob was remarkable for his thorough acquaintance with the city in which he lived. He knew "each nook and bosky dell" in the Old Town, and could have winked you the characters of all the taverns, of their waiters and their beef-steaks, at a moment's notice. He could distinguish almost every citizen by head-mark, and not a carriage rolled along the street but well he knew its owner. He was the annalist of the history, the mobs, the manners, the jokes of Edinburgh—a human vial containing its whole essential spirit, corked with wit and labelled with pimples. Contrary to all reasonable expectation, he was an early riser. Howsoever he might spend the evening, there was he every morning on the street, by seven at the latest, walking about the empty city, as if to enjoy the air, such as it was. He seemed to have a strange attachment to the Post-Office. He liked to lounge there, and, with a consequential face, behold the arrival and departure of the mails. He seemed to have a pleasure in reflecting that he belonged to a nation which boasted of such noble instruments and significations of refinement. If, while thus whiling away his time, he observed a stranger come up, and seem at a loss about any thing, he would accost him with an urbane air, inquire what he was looking for, and officiously bustle along to show him the particular office he wanted. He seemed to think this a duty he owed to his native city, and he always bore, for a minute or two after, the complacent air of a man who knows he has done something that he ought to do. It was a remarkable thing of Bob, that, though he had no wish to rise in his profession, or be any thing more than the poor devil he had ever been, yet he had a certain veneration for exalted things. The judges he looked upon as only a lesser kind of deities. The principal barristers, too, he regarded with prostrate respect—however true it might be, that, when he required the services of counsel, he resorted to a certain outcast of the faculty, something like himself, out of whom he would sap an opinion by a gill of whisky. He liked to sit under the shadows of lofty things. I have seen him, all threadbare as he was, make a consequential entry into the High Church, ascend to its dignified official galleries, and, by virtue of a sneaking acquaintance with the mace-bearers, plant himself in the *Lords' seat*—supposing it to be vacant for that day—where, throwing one arm over the back of the chair, and the other over the velvet cushion in front, he would put on a most important nose, as if he felt himself part of the grand old building itself, or of the system connected with it, or as if he had thought the honour and glory of the judges was for the time devolved upon himself, in consequence of his merely occupying their accustomed station.

The strangest thing of all connected with Bob, was, that he had a kind of clerk, named Nimmo, who as far transcended himself in shabbiness and dissipation, as he transcended the majority of his brethren. In external aspect, Nimmo was a mere scarecrow—a creature that seemed hardly to have a footing on the earth as a human being. He bore nearly the same relation to Shillinglaw which Justice Silence bears to Justice Shallow—that is to say, he was an exaggerated specimen of the same tribe, and exhibited all the peculiarities of his principal at an advanced stage. He was a prospective indication of what Bob was to become, if he should survive so long. When Bob by any chance got a new suit of clothes, Nimmo was favoured with the cast-off garments, which he wore on and on so long as his master continued without a new supply. Therefore, by the time Bob became shabby, Nimmo was threadbare—when Bob was threadbare, Nimmo was in rags—when Bob came to rags, Nimmo was an honourable prisoner in his den in the Old Assembly Close, from utter lack of livery. Thus, also, when Bob, after a long course of rather starving practice, fell in with a client who had a tolerable income, and began to get florid and in good case, Nimmo followed and exhibited a slight trace of colour on the wonted pale of his cheeks. When Bob began once more to fade, Nimmo withered before him—when Bob was looking thin, Nimmo had shrunk to a radish—and when Bob was attenuated and sickly, Nimmo was as slender and airy as a moonbeam. Nimmo was in all things a little more extreme than Shillinglaw. If Shillinglaw was elevated, Nimmo was tipsy—if Shillinglaw was tipsy, Nimmo was drunk—if Shillinglaw persevered and got fully drunk too, then Nimmo was to be found packed up like a wisp of straw, beneath his principal's chair. Nimmo in some things cleared the way for Bob, and in others followed upon his track—he was at once his vidette and his rear-guard—the aurora of his rising, the twilight of his decline.

Nimmo was not always to be found in connection with Shillinglaw: he was no regular attendant—far less, it may well be supposed, enjoyed any regular salary. Bob, however, never wanted him for any purpose but what he was readily found. Up he started, like an imp at the call of a magician; and when the business was over, down he again sunk, and was seen no more. It was only, however, in Shillinglaw's com-

pany that Nimmo was any thing. Apart from Bob, who had a kind of consonant-like existence, Nimmo was a mere vowel—a *sough*—an aspirate of Nature's voice. So far from being a limb of the law, he was not even a nail-paring. By day he hardly cast a shadow; by night he was himself a shade.

Bob's ending was in keeping with his maudlin existence; unfortunately his mother died before him, and his subsequent fate was not very happy. Hitherto he had always been kept in a clean shirt, however poor his outer garments might be—and every body knows how a little bit of clean linen has a tendency to keep a poor wretch in countenance. But this respectable luxury could not now always be commanded, and Bob's shirt became almost as yellow as his faded nankeens. At length, one day, he died; he had just dropped into a tavern in the Anchor Close, intent on the refreshment of a draught of beer, and was shortly found in a sitting posture, stiff and stark, leaning over the empty jug. "Ah, pur man," said Lucky Milson, concluding a description of the affecting scene to a number of Bob's old tavern acquaintances, "Bob was aye kind to a' body, and a' body liked him; pur fallow, he was the worst freend to himsel'." "An that's a true word ye say, mistress; sae, bring us another gill and a biscuit—Bob was aye fond o' bakes." So they ate a biscuit to his memory. To what end Nimmo arrived, I am unable to tell. Of Bob there would probably be something to bury; but, as for Nimmo, that ceremony would be spared. Insubstantial in life, he must have been still less substantial in death. He would happen to exhale some day, and, like a whiff of smoke, vanish into thin air.

### THE PHILOSOPHY OF DEATH.

NO. III.

THE signs which indicate the approach of death depend entirely on the causes by which death may be induced; and with these it is highly important that we should become acquainted, seeing that no disappointment can fall heavier on the human heart than that which is occasioned by the promise that there is yet hope of restoration to life, while in reality death is already stealing on the object of our solicitude. In cases of sudden death occurring in persons that have not an apoplectic appearance, it is often impossible, even for the most skillful physician, to predicate its accession; but in the majority of cases where death supervenes as the consequence of disease destroying the harmony of action which must subsist between the vital organs, and on which the existence of the phenomena of life appears to be dependent, it is possible, by comparing the progress of the disease with the comparative strength of the patient, to form a pretty accurate idea of the period to which his sufferings may be extended. Hippocrates, in determining the signs of approaching dissolution after acute diseases, dwells much on the character of the physiognomy. The nose (he observes) becomes sharp—the eyes hollow—the temples collapsed—the ears cold and contracted—the lobes inverted—the skin about the forehead hard, tense, and dry—and the whole face assumes a palish green, a black, livid, or leaden hue. So true to nature is this description, that in schools of medicine, even to the present day, it is constantly referred to as the *Facies Hippocratica*, and held to be sufficiently indicative of the approach of death. To these, with equal truth, he has added other signs which may be regarded as no less premonitory of the impending event: thus, if the eyes be perpetually rolling, tumid, hollow, and very dull; if the eyelids be drawn aside, or full of wrinkles, and of a pale livid colour; if the lips be relaxed, and hang down, becoming cold, and of whitish appearance; if the hands be extended, collecting floating appearances, &c., we may predict that death is at no great distance. Furthermore, when the pulse can scarcely be felt at the wrist, and the feet and hands become cold; when the fingers and toes become pinched and livid, the most unfavourable prognostications may be made: all which signs, be it observed, admit of a satisfactory physiological explanation. The nose becomes sharp, because the muscles of the face having lost their power of action, the nostrils fall in; the eye becomes hollow, because the fat on which it rested in the orbit, as on a soft cushion, has been absorbed; the face, lips, tips of the fingers and toes, assume a palish green or leaden hue, because the blood (as explained in our preceding article on this subject) does not undergo that change in the lungs by which it obtains its stimulating qualities and bright scarlet colour; the feet and hands become cold, because the heart is no longer able to propel the blood, on which the extrication of animal heat appears to depend, to the extremities of the body; lastly, the motion of the fingers in puckering up the clothes, or catching at floating objects, is a convulsive action, depending on the roots of the nerves which supply the hand and arm being irritated at their origin by the effusion of the watery part of the blood, which often occurs during the progress of fever and other acute diseases. These signs of approaching

death did not escape the observation of Shakspeare, who notices them in describing the death of Falstaff.

The influence of the mind in accelerating or retarding the approach of death, is exceedingly remarkable, and may in some instances account for those presentiments of a fatal termination of their disease, which some persons seem prophetically to entertain. A case is recorded of a person who had been sentenced to be bled to death, but instead of the punishment being actually inflicted, he was merely induced to believe it was so, by water, while his eyes were blinded, being tricked down his arm. This mimicry, however, of the operation so completely depressed the action of the heart, that the man lost his life as irrecoverably as if the vital fluid had been really abstracted. We read of another unfortunate person who had been condemned to be beheaded; and the moment his neck was adjusted on the block, a reprieve arrived; but the victim was already sacrificed—the vital principle had been as effectually extinguished by the fear of the axe as it would have been by its fall. Instances, indeed, are recorded of persons, who—through the medium of respiration, it is to be presumed—have possessed a controlling power over the action of the heart, so that they could actually feign death at pleasure. The celebrated Dr Cheyne has narrated a case of this kind, which is established by an irrefragable combination of evidence. It is that of a Colonel Townsend, who, he informs us, "could die, and yet by an effort, or somehow, could come to life again." On the occasion referred to, he composed himself on his back, and lay in a still posture for some time. Dr Cheyne held his right hand, Dr Baynard placed his hand upon his heart, and Mr Skrine held a looking-glass to his mouth. Dr Cheyne states that his pulse gradually sunk until it was no longer perceptible to the nicest touch; Dr Baynard also could not feel the least motion of the heart; nor Mr Skrine perceive the least breath on the bright mirror he held to his mouth. In this state of counterfeited death he remained half an hour; after which, his pulse became perceptible, the action of the heart gradually returned, and he again breathed sensibly, and began to speak. He died, however, it may be added, that evening, and most likely the victim of his improper efforts to imitate the state of death. Another case of a person who could feign death when he pleased, and suspend the action of his heart until its pulsation could no longer be felt, is mentioned in the *Lectures of Dr Cleghorn of Glasgow*. Celsus, we may furthermore observe, speaks of a priest that could "separate himself from his senses when he list, and lie like a dead man, void of life." But without accumulating additional evidence, it is perfectly clear that these cases distinctly show how powerful the effect of the mind is in depressing or exciting the action of the heart, and, consequently, in modifying the character and duration of disease. Hence the apprehension of death, when permitted to take firm hold of a patient, is, in the majority of instances, a most unhappy sign, as that very apprehension may itself induce the death which thereby appears to have been mysteriously predicted.

The clearing up of the mind previous to death, and the predictions occasionally made by dying persons of the hour of their approaching dissolution, is one of the most curious subjects that can engage the attention of the philosopher: it was noticed particularly by *Aretæus*, in cases of persons who had died from brain fever. The first effect of the subsidence of the violent excitement in that disease, he observes, is, that the patient's mind becomes clear, and his sensations exquisitely keen; he is the first person to discover he is about to die, and announces this to the attendants; he seems to hold converse with the spirits of those who have departed, as if they stood in his presence, and his soul appears to acquire a prophetic power. Elsewhere he remarks, that, in the act of disengaging itself from the body, the mind becomes purer and more essential, as if commencing already its spiritual existence. Sir Henry Hallford, in an elegantly written dissertation on this observation of *Aretæus*, cites other cases in corroboration of the fact that the mind often clears up in a very extraordinary manner in the last hour of life. There is no occasion, however, to attribute this to any preternatural cause, seeing that it may be explained on very simple physiological principles. Immediately before death, the heart often beats strongly, and the respiration is hurried; the consequence is, that the blood, in passing through the lungs, becomes more perfectly oxygenised than it had previously been, and is in that state transmitted with accelerated force through the brain. Thus is this organ subjected to a higher stimulus than it had previously received, and thereby excited to renew its functions with unexpected vigour. Hence the vivid recollection, the clear reasoning, the perspicacity of judgment, the acute sensibility, manifested by many persons on their death-bed, who seem all at once to recover more than ordinary vigour of intellect, and are enabled to moralise almost in an inspired tone on the life they are leaving, and the future state which appears to have already opened before them. But in respect to the predictions of death above alluded to, this explanation is by no means sufficient; and the more we investigate the subject, the more imperatively shall we find ourselves called upon to admit, that so little do we know of the possible conditions and relations of the human mind, that it may, in certain states of apparent abstraction, concentrate its energies within itself, and take cognisance of events and objects to



others imperceptible. By powerful mental emotions such states are certainly induced; thus, under the operation of fear, the victim of distress sits immovable as a marble statue, deaf and blind to all external appeals; the mind within the body is in a concentrated and isolated condition, sympathising not with external signs, but held only by the power by which it is affected.

However varied may be the precursory signs of death, there can be no doubt but that the act of death is in all cases unattended by pain. It is true, that, when watching by the bed-side of sickness, the eye of affection is apt to interpret every motion, sigh, or groan, of the sufferer, into expressions of deep, perhaps unutterable, pain; and hereby the imagination fevers itself into a false belief that the act of dying is one of the most excruciating struggles that can be encountered. But this gloomy apprehension is in reality ill founded, for physicians are well aware that sighs, sobs, tears, groans, nay, convulsions of the body, are not necessarily indicative of existing pain, since they occur in apoplexy, epilepsy, hysterical and other convulsive fits, from which the person that has been so affected recovers without any recollection of having endured suffering. That persons affected with sickness suffer pain, there is no doubt; but this pain arises simply from the disease, and is modified, and rendered more or less acute, by the organ which may be affected. Thus, the loose and spongy textures may be almost disorganised in the living body, without any consciousness of the extent or even existence of the disease, which often happens indeed with the lungs in that fatal malady consumption; and hence the patients in this disease frequently rely on their recovering, even to the last moment of their existence. But this is not the case with the denser tissues, those which medical men call serous, the white smooth membranes lining the chest and abdomen, and forming one of the coats of the intestines, which are never affected without very acute pain; and this, it may be presumed, arises from the density and inelasticity of this texture, which, when injected by a preternatural quantity of blood, as in inflammation, remains unyielding, and thereby subjects its nerves to a corresponding degree of painful compression. Hence the acute pain of pleurisy, inflammation of the bowels, &c.; in all which cases the vulgar idea is, that the person suffers a most painful death; but this is not the case, for we must discriminate between the pain of the disease and the act of dying; and we shall in all such cases discover that the vital powers become absolutely exhausted before the last breath is expired. There is, therefore, no consciousness in the act of dying any more than in that of falling into a deep slumber. A very elegant writer, in a beautifully written essay, entitled "Erroneous Notions of Death Reproved," observes, "In particular it is thought that this final event passes with some dreadful visitation of unknown agony over the departing sufferer. It is imagined that there is some strange and mysterious reluctance in the spirit to leave the body; that it struggles long to retain its hold, and is at last torn with violence from its mortal tenement; and, in fine, that this conflict between the soul and the body greatly adds to the pangs of the dissolution. But it may be justly presumed, from what usually appears, that there is no particular nor acute suffering, not more than is often experienced during life, nay, rather that there is less, because the very powers of suffering are enfeebled, the very capacities of pain are nearly exhausted. Death is to be regarded rather as a sleep than a conflict of our faculties; it is repose—the body's repose after the busy and toilsome day of life."

#### EVALINE.—A TALE.

[From "The Druid."]

THE pernicious effects of too much indulgence to children are in general obvious to all but the over-fond parent. The neglect of a little salutary discipline, during the period of youth, proves indeed very frequently the bane of happiness throughout every after stage of life. It is, however, an evil which proceeds not from corrupt dispositions, but is rather what might be called an amiable weakness. Yet it ought to be carefully guarded against, even for the sake of the objects so dearly beloved.

We seldom fail to find a child losing the regard of every one else, just in proportion as he receives improper indulgence from his parents. He of course becomes untoward, haughty, and petulant, and is in danger of growing up, like Esau, with a hand raised against every one, and every one's hand upraised against him. Accustomed to the gratification of all his desires, he can ill brook control or disappointment, and is apt to become impetuous upon every occasion of restraint and provocation, either real or imaginary.

The lasting influence of these intemperate early habits too often mars the happiness of social connections. From them proceed the turbulent and overbearing husband, and the self-willed and undutiful wife. It is therefore the duty of the guardians of youth, as they love them and prize their future prosperity, to guard against this fatal error. They ought also to watch over and study the different dispositions of their minds, and to endeavour, accordingly, to arrange their mode of individual treatment.

Evaline was the only daughter of respectable parents. Engagements in an extensive business kept her father much from home, and her mother was of

a weakly and delicate constitution. Evaline was their all, and their affection for her knew no bounds. She was, therefore, brought up with every indulgence which this excess of fondness could draw forth. She early contracted an intimate friendship with Agnes, the daughter of a widow lady, who had been left with a numerous family, and lived in the immediate neighbourhood. Agnes was educated with ideas very different from those of her young friend, having been, of necessity and from principle, taught the profitable lesson of industry and frugal economy, and to consider health and intellectual powers as given for higher purposes than the amusement of the possessor. The mispending of time, and the misapplication of these precious endowments, was impressed upon her mind as being a source of never-failing unhappiness and calamity to the infatuated abusers of such inestimable blessings. As she had learned from experience that useful employment constitutes pleasure, and is pregnant with advantage, it prevented time from appearing tedious, and ennui was only known to her by name.

The two friends were nearly of an age, and happened to be married much about the same time. Agnes was united to a deserving man, whose dispositions exactly coincided with her own. They had not wealth, but enjoyed a competency, and were contented and happy. Evaline became the wife of a worthy man, possessed of an ample fortune. He was enamoured of her beauty, which in a great measure blinded him to her foibles, although these were but too obvious to others. Her conduct after marriage, however, proved so glaring, that his eyes, though reluctantly, were at last opened. *Dress, equipage, and visiting*, engrossed all her thoughts and attention. Her disappointed husband fondly cherished the expectation that time and reflection might bring round a reform; but in this he found himself greatly mistaken. In due time she brought him a son. He now hoped that the career of folly would be at an end, and flattered himself that her attention would naturally be turned to an object so interesting. But no change in the lady's conduct took place. She soon informed him that a nurse must be provided for the child, because she would undergo neither the fatigue nor the confinement which the discharge of that duty required. He ventured to expostulate, but was upbraided with an unfeeling disregard of her happiness.

She next became the parent of a lovely daughter, without being diverted from her injurious propensities by a concern for her tender charge. Matters daily growing worse, and although she saw her husband unhappy, she did not wish to consider herself the cause. As she could not endure the want of company, she became less select in her choice, and more extravagant in her follies, until the tongue of censure at length began to exaggerate them into enormous crimes. Her husband could no longer remain silent; and as she did not choose to be admonished, a very unpleasant altercation took place. In the course of this, she branded him with want of affection, and questioned his ever having entertained for her the regard which he professed. She supposed his motives from the beginning were mercenary; and that now, having obtained her fortune, he began to discover his dislike of her person. She had, however, been always accustomed to gratify and follow her own inclinations, and had never, even when a child, met with either check or remonstrance from those who had a much better title to apply them, had they thought such interference necessary. She concluded with adding, that he might spare himself the pain and trouble of expressing them, as she was not disposed either to listen to his dictates, or attend to his admonitions. To the last part of her speech he made no reply, but throughout the remainder of the day appeared thoughtful and reserved; and when he addressed her, it was with a studied civility, which she could not help feeling. Next morning he ordered his horse; and having put a paper into her hand, and told her that he would not return until the following day, he mounted and rode off. She hastily broke the seal, and read the following letter:—

"My dear Evaline.—For such you still are, in despite of your errors and my sufferings, I do not yet consider you wicked, although I much fear you are on the highway to ruin and infamy. As I, therefore, feel myself unequal to the task of combating the evil effects of your early habits, I have now resolved to restore you to the charge of those under whose auspices they were formed. I shall give you these three reasons, by which I have been influenced in forming this resolution: The first is, that your ruin may not be accomplished while under my protection; the second, a dread of the evil consequences your giddy example may have upon our little ones; and the third, a desire of mutual peace. Alas! how soon have my high-fledged hopes of conjugal felicity passed away like a morning cloud, and left me forlorn and wretched! My house is become a scene of riot, and the beloved of my bosom cannot spare an hour's attention to a fond husband and his helpless children.

"I shall, however, satisfy you that my motives in forming the connection have been every thing but mercenary. You shall carry back the full sum I received as your dowry: and as you set a much higher value upon it than I do, to this shall be added another, not unworthy of your acceptance. Although your improvidence and profusion might soon have put it out of my power, I have still enough for my own wants, and wherewith to educate my children in the way I approve.

With these wrecks of my blasted prospects, I shall retire to some peaceful seclusion, where, by devoting my whole attention to the formation of their youthful minds, I will endeavour to guard them against those habits, by the effects of which I am now overwhelmed with distress. The plan of your departure I expect will be arranged before my return; and may you ever be happier than is your sorrowful but affectionate husband."

Evaline was thunderstruck. She had no idea of matters being brought to such a crisis. While she could not repress a sensation of conscious shame, she at the same time knew not how to act, as it would be so humiliating to make the matter known to any of her fashionable acquaintances. She now thought of Agnes, who, since her marriage, had been by her forgotten and neglected. She instantly set out to call upon her early friend, and found her busily engaged in the management of her family, with a lovely child in her arms, and another at her knee. Agnes received her with unaffected kindness, and, after repeated efforts, learned from her the object of her visit, and was permitted to read the letter. This being done, she remained silent until her friend, having urged her to speak her mind freely, begged her counsel and advice. "My dear Evaline," said Agnes, hesitatingly, "then I must say I think you are to be blamed, very much to be blamed." "Well, then," replied Evaline in faltering accents, "allowing that to be the case, what would you advise me to do?" "Just," answered Agnes, "the only thing you can do to re-establish yourself in the regard of your husband, and in the esteem of the world, and to secure your own happiness and honour; you ought to receive your husband on his return, with every mark of penitence and submission. You ought to make a thousand concessions, though he do not require them. But you must first resolve firmly within yourself, that your future life shall be devoted to make atonement to him for the errors of the past." "But do you think," replied Evaline, with tears streaming from her eyes, "that he can receive me with forgiveness, or love me as formerly?" "Yes," said Agnes, "I think he will. His affection seems to be still within your reach; but one step farther might put it for ever out of your power. Do but read that letter dispassionately, and see what an affectionate husband you have rendered unhappy."

Evaline was silent, and appeared much humbled. She took an affectionate leave of Agnes, and returned home, secluded herself to ponder over the past, and to prepare her mind for future conduct. Upon a serious retrospection, she felt extremely dissatisfied. The longer she considered her own imprudences, an increasing respect for her husband gradually arose in her mind, and she now anxiously longed for an opportunity of making those concessions to which she at first felt so much reluctance. Her husband returned, and before the repentant Evaline had completed an acknowledgment of her errors, she was enclosed in an embrace of forgiveness and love. She has now become as remarkable for conjugal affection, maternal solicitude, and every social virtue, as she had formerly been for levity and extravagance. Agnes is her confidante and counsellor. She is a tender mother, and a dutiful wife. "Her husband is known in the gates, her children arise up and call her blessed; her husband also, and he praiseth her;"—and in the words of the elegant Thomson,

They flourish now in mutual bliss, and rear  
A numerous offspring, lovely like themselves  
And good, the grace of all the country round.

#### WASTES OF HUMAN LIFE.

MOST of our readers are probably aware, that, about fifteen or sixteen hundred years ago, when the Romans and a few other civilised nations existed along the shores of the Mediterranean, the central and northern parts of Europe were occupied by immense hordes of pastoral people, somewhat like those which now pervade the same relative districts of Asia. These hordes, it may also be known, finally overwhelmed the Roman empire, and gave rise to the present governments of Europe. Gibbon, in his History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire, gives a most accurate and interesting account of the steps by which they accomplished their purpose, and of the immense wastes of human life which took place before they effected it; and of this account, Mr Malthus has given a spirited abridgement, in his work on Population. We take the liberty of extracting the latter, as a chapter of human history, which, from its extraordinary character, cannot fail to impress our readers.

"The shepherds of the north of Europe were long held in check by the vigour of the Roman arms, and the terror of the Roman name. The formidable irruption of the Cimbric in search of new settlements, though signalled by the destruction of five consular armies, was at length arrested in its victorious career by Marius, and the barbarians were taught to repent their rashness by the almost complete extermination of this powerful colony. The names of Julius Cæsar, of Drusus, Tiberius, and Germanicus, impressed on their minds by the slaughter of their countrymen, continued to inspire them with a fear of encroaching on

the Roman territory. But they were rather triumphed over than vanquished; and though the armies or colonies which they sent forth were either cut off or forced back into their original seats, the vigour of the great German nation remained unimpaired, and ready to pour forth her hardy sons in constant succession, wherever they could force an opening for themselves by their swords. The feeble reigns of Decius, Gallus, Emilianus, Valerian, and Gallienus, afforded such an opening, and were in consequence marked by a general irruption of barbarians. The Goths, who were supposed to have migrated in the course of some years from Scandinavia to the Euxine, were bribed to withdraw their victorious troops by an annual tribute. But no sooner was the dangerous secret of the wealth and weakness of the Roman empire thus revealed to the world, than new swarms of barbarians spread devastation through the frontier provinces, and terror as far as the gates of Rome. The Franks, the Allemanni, the Goths, and adventurers of less considerable tribes comprehended under these general appellations, poured like a torrent on different parts of the empire. Rapine and oppression destroyed the produce of the present and the hope of future harvests. A long and general famine was followed by a wasting plague, which for fifteen years ravaged every city and province of the Roman empire; and, judging from the mortality in some spots, it was conjectured, that in a few years, war, pestilence, and famine, had consumed the moiety of the human species. Yet the tide of emigration still continued at intervals to roll impetuously from the north, and the succession of martial princes, who repaired the misfortunes of their predecessors, and propped the falling fate of the empire, had to accomplish the labours of Hercules in freeing the Roman territory from these barbarous invaders. The Goths, who, in the year 250 and the following years, ravaged the empire both by sea and land with various success, but in the end with the almost total loss of their adventurous bands, in the year 269 sent out an emigration of immense numbers with their wives and families for the purposes of settlement. This formidable body, which was said to consist at first of 320,000 barbarians, was ultimately destroyed and dispersed by the vigour and wisdom of the emperor Claudius. His successor, Aurelian, encountered and vanquished new hosts of the same name, that had quitted their settlements in the Ukraine; but one of the implied conditions of the peace was, that he should withdraw the Roman forces from Dacia, and relinquish this great province to the Goths and Vandals. A new and most formidable invasion of the Allemanni threatened soon after to sack the mistress of the world, and three great and bloody battles were fought by Aurelian before this destroying host could be exterminated, and Italy be delivered from its ravages.

The strength of Aurelian had crushed on every side the enemies of Rome. After his death, they seemed to revive with an increase of fury and numbers. They were again vanquished on all sides by the active vigour of Probus. The deliverance of Gaul alone from German invaders is reported to have cost the lives of four hundred thousand barbarians. The victorious emperor pursued his successes into Germany itself, and the princes of the country, astonished at his presence, and dismayed and exhausted by the ill success of their last emigration, submitted to any terms that the conquerors might impose. Probus, and afterwards Diocletian, adopted the plan of recruiting the exhausted provinces of the empire by granting lands to the fugitive or captive barbarians, and disposing of their superfluous numbers where they might be the least likely to be dangerous to the state; but such colonisations were an insufficient vent for the population of the north, and the ardent temper of the barbarians would not always bend to the slow labours of agriculture. During the vigorous reign of Diocletian, unable to make an effectual impression on the Roman frontiers, the Goths, the Vandals, the Gepides, the Burgundians, and the Allemanni, wasted each other's strength by mutual hostilities, while the subjects of the empire enjoyed the bloody spectacle, conscious that whoever vanquished, they vanquished the enemies of Rome.

Under the reign of Constantine, the Goths were again formidable. Their strength had been restored by a long peace, and a new generation had arisen, which no longer remembered the misfortunes of ancient days. In two successive wars, great numbers of them were slain. Vanquished on every side, they were driven into the mountains; and in the course of a severe campaign, above a hundred thousand were computed to have perished by cold and hunger. Constantine adopted the plan of Probus and his successors, in granting lands to those suppliant barbarians who were expelled from their own country. Towards the end of his reign, a competent portion in the provinces of Pannonia, Thrace, Macedonia, and Italy, was assigned for the habitation and subsistence of three hundred thousand Sarmatians.

The warlike Julian had to encounter and vanquish new swarms of Franks and Allemanni, that, emigrating from their German forests during the civil wars of Constantine, settled in different parts of Gaul, and made the scene of their devastations three times more extensive than that of their conquests. Destroyed and repulsed on every side, they were pursued in five expeditions into their own country; but Julian

had conquered, as soon as he had penetrated into Germany; and in the midst of that mighty hive which had sent out such swarms of people as to keep the Roman world in perpetual dread, the principal obstacles to his progress were almost impassable roads, and vast unpeopled forests.

Though thus subdued and prostrated by the victorious arms of Julian, this hydra-headed monster rose again after a few years; and the firmness, vigilance, and powerful genius of Valentinian, were fully called into action, in protecting his dominions from the different irruptions of the Allemanni, the Burgundians, the Saxons, the Goths, the Quadi, and the Sarmatians.

The fate of Rome was at length determined by an irresistible emigration of the Huns from the east and north, which precipitated on the empire the whole body of the Goths; and the continuance of this powerful pressure on the nations of Germany seemed to prompt them to the resolution of abandoning to the fugitives of Sarmatia their woods and morasses, or at least of discharging their superfluous numbers on the provinces of the Roman empire. An emigration of four hundred thousand persons issued from the same coast of the Baltic which had poured forth the myriads of Cimbri and Teutones during the vigour of the republic. When this host was destroyed by war and famine, other adventurers succeeded. The Suevi, the Vandals, the Alani, the Burgundians, passed the Rhine never more to retreat. The conquerors who first settled were expelled or exterminated by new invaders. Clouds of barbarians seemed to collect from all parts of the northern hemisphere. Gathering fresh darkness and terror as they rolled on, the congregated bodies at length obscured the sun of Italy, and sunk the western world in night.

In two centuries from the flight of the Goths across the Danube, barbarians of various names and lineage had plundered and taken possession of Thrace, Pannonia, Gaul, Britain, Spain, Africa, and Italy. The most horrible devastations, and an incredible destruction of the human species, accompanied these rapid conquests; and famine and pestilence, which always march in the train of war, when it ravages with such inconsiderate cruelty, raged in every part of Europe. The historians of the times, who beheld these scenes of desolation, labour and are at a loss for expressions to describe them; but beyond the power of language, the numbers and the destructive violence of these barbarous invaders were evinced by the total change which took place in the state of Europe. These tremendous effects, so long and so deeply felt throughout the fairest portions of the earth, may be traced to the simple cause of the superiority of the power of population to the means of subsistence.

From the first irruption of the Cimbri, to the final extinction of the western empire, the efforts of the German nations to colonise or plunder were unceasing. The numbers that were cut off during this period by war and famine were almost incalculable, and such as could not possibly have been supported with undiminished vigour by a country thinly peopled, unless the stream had been supplied by a spring of very extraordinary power.

The true cause which put a stop to the continuance of northern emigration was the impossibility any longer of making an impression on the most desirable countries of Europe. They were then inhabited by the descendants of the bravest and most enterprising of the German tribes; and it was not probable that they should so soon degenerate from the valour of their ancestors, as to suffer their lands to be wrested from them by inferior numbers and inferior skill, though perhaps superior hardihood.

Checked for a time by the bravery and poverty of their neighbours by land, the enterprising spirit and overflowing numbers of the Scandinavian nations soon found vent by sea. Feared before the reign of Charlemagne, they were repelled with difficulty by the care and vigour of that great prince, but during the distractions of the empire under his feeble successors, they spread like a devouring flame over Lower Saxony, Friesland, Holland, Flanders, and the banks of the Rhine as far as Mentz.

After having long ravaged the coasts, they penetrated into the heart of France, pillaged and burnt her fairest towns, levied immense tributes on her monarchs, and at length obtained by grant one of the finest provinces of the kingdom. They made themselves even dreaded in Spain, Italy, and Greece, spreading every where desolation and terror. Sometimes they turned their arms against each other, as if bent on their own mutual destruction; at other times transported colonies to unknown or uninhabited countries, as if they were willing to repair in one place the horrid destruction of the human race occasioned by their furious ravages in others.

The maladministration and civil wars of the Saxon kings of England produced the same effect as the weakness which followed the reign of Charlemagne in France, and for two hundred years the British isles were incessantly ravaged, and often in part subdued, by these northern invaders. During the eighth, ninth, and tenth centuries, the sea was covered with their vessels from one end of Europe to the other, and the countries now the most powerful in arts and arms, were the prey of their constant depredations. The growing and consolidating strength of these countries at length removed all further prospect of success from such invasions. The nations of the north were slowly

and reluctantly compelled to confine themselves within their natural limits, and to exchange their pastoral manners, and with them the peculiar facilities of plunder and emigration which they afforded, for the patient labours and slow returns of trade and agriculture. But the slowness of these returns necessarily effected an important change in the manners of the people."

#### HINTS TO CLEVER PEOPLE.

In this United Kingdom there is certainly a vast number of clever people. Every fiftieth man, at least, possesses a capacity and activity of mind considerably above his fellows—belongs to what may be called nature's aristocracy—and is fitted, if his faculties got fair play, to direct and improve his fellow-creatures. While talent, however, is thus abundant, all generous minds must lament to see that, in so many instances, it is repressed by circumstances, misdirected, abused, and lost. Not one out of twenty of the clever fellows brings his abilities to any good. Some throw themselves away in attempts to compose verses, which, even when pretty good, as they rarely are, are seldom of any real use. Others content themselves with the reputation of being the village wit, or with the eclat of animating the proceedings of some senseless convivial club. Some assume one outlet for their superior faculties, and some another; but in too many instances, it is one which leads to no useful purpose, either for themselves or their fellows. Even where the clever fellows make a decided attempt in literature, how rarely do we see a good end in view! Their exertions, whether in prose or verse, are generally the mere sports of fancy and frivolity—trifles light as air—aimless, endless, hap-hazard nonsense. Much of this stuff is published, as any one who looks over a bookseller's counter, or a literary journal, may see; but the quantity committed to paper and print is nothing to the quantity which never sees the light. No one, perhaps, except the conductor of a periodical work for which "contributions are respectfully requested," could form an idea of the wilderness of literary crudities and absurdities which never get beyond manuscript. An amount of time and talent altogether beyond calculation, must be thus annually thrown away.

To the clever people who have not literary tendencies, we would present the following considerations:—Wherever you live, whether in towns, or in remote rustic situations, there is always a considerable number of inferior minds around you, liable to be operated upon by you, to good or evil, and upon whom you are, as it were, *invited by nature* thus to operate. The dispositions which almost invariably accompany talent will lead you to place yourselves in influential positions in relation to those persons; and the sole question, then, must be, whether you are to encourage them in evil or to direct them in good. You will certainly never hesitate in adopting the latter course, if you can be brought to see clearly what is right and what is wrong. Now, a great many things have heretofore passed off very well, on account of the comparative blindness of the community, which the present age has, upon unquestionable grounds, pronounced to be vicious: other matters, which promise to be of high service in improving the moral nature of the species, are only now coming into view. I would have you clever people to study these matters as fast as you can, and to act accordingly. I would have you to band yourselves together as a moral police all over the country, for the purpose of discouraging whatever is hurtful, and encouraging whatever is beneficial. Down with drinking, for one thing—or at least all except the sipping of some innocent beverage, which may promote sociability—for this is beyond question the greatest obstacle to social improvement that is at present in operation. Sanction it nowhere by your presence or participation; rail at it, ridicule it, show its vulgarity, allow it no quarter. To our comfort, it is certainly going off at the lower extremity of society, and cannot long be considered as any thing but the mark of a very low character. But its abolition cannot be consummated too soon: down with it, then, I again say. Hustle it, knock it, tear it, kick it, trample it, on all occasions, till you make it perfectly contemptible. If you find men anxious for political privileges, tell them they cannot be fit, either to obtain or to keep them, till they have cleared themselves from this debasing vice, which is just one of the toys that have hitherto diverted them from such objects. If you find men solicitous of any improvement whatever in their condition, tell them they must first give up spirituous liquor in



any of its seductive forms, for that is the antichrist of all improvement. In short, omit no opportunity of either positively or negatively discountenancing this grand source of all misery and depravity.

It is not perhaps necessary to suggest all the points upon which you could improve the people around you. But I may advert, in particular, to the putting down of narrow, canting, and illiberal views; to the disapprobation of cruelty in young people; to the dissemination of friendly and benevolent feelings among men, instead of the envyings, jealousies, and backbitings which too generally prevail. In all these departments, a great deal might be done without your going at all out of your way. I might also hint how much could be done in the way of improving the physical condition of your neighbours. Be yourselves examples of obedience to the laws which direct the proper management of the person, and take every occasion to show others when and where they are wrong. In the simple matter of ventilation, you might work a great reformation. By acquainting yourselves with the principles of physiology, which can be obtained very conveniently from various books,\* you might work wonders, in the mere course of your daily conversation, towards the preservation of the health and lives of those around you.

These hints refer only to what you may do in the ordinary course of life. There must be, in many instances, a possibility of more regular and decisive efforts. Many of you could employ yourselves, during the hours of leisure, in holding little assemblies of your neighbours, and entertaining and instructing them with the surplus of your own knowledge. In Edinburgh, there are several young men, who, after ten hours of labour at some ordinary trade or mechanical employment, teach infant-schools for their amusement. The feelings of these lads, after an evening thus spent, must be of no unenviable character: the sense of doing good, so often or rather so constantly in their minds, must of itself elevate and purify their natures, and fit them, in the long-run, for superior situations in life. One of you might easily make himself tolerably proficient in a certain branch of knowledge—suppose botany. How delightful would it be to have his companions to accompany him on a summer evening into the fields, and there, from the actual objects, impress the technicalities of the science! Another might study chemistry, and, with the assistance of a little apparatus, purchased by general contribution, give lectures in the best way he could to his neighbours. Even to gather a few friends, and read to them extracts from works not generally accessible, would be of great utility: and were conversation encouraged to arise out of such readings, every hazard of languor would be avoided. In many situations, these objects could be accomplished by regular institutions, such as exist in most considerable towns; and gratuitous exertion would not thus be necessary. It is questionable, however, if it were not best in the most of situations to trust to gratuitous instruction. It might be inferior in quality; but it would save expense, and every thing informs us that knowledge must be cheap, or of no price at all, if we are to expect it to make way among the mass of the people.

So much for the clever people who do not write; and now for the clever people who do. To such people I would say, simply—Look abroad upon society, and observe what are the objects upon which it is now chiefly bent. Is society at present disposed to indulge in the day-dreams of poetry? Does it delight in recitals of war? Does it admire heroes and conquerors? Does it take pleasure in intricate criticisms upon classical writers? Is it to be tickled away from its own interests, as some continental nations are, by operas and plays? Does it occupy itself much with toys of any kind? Is fiddle-faddle, in any shape, its presiding genius? No: such things pleased and perverted our fathers—absorbed much mind, much time, and much capital, twenty years ago and upwards; but they do so no longer. The Intellect and Reflection of the country are now chiefly devoted to the realities of life, and the means of social advancement. The directly ornamental is in some measure put out of view for the time, in order that we may bring up the lee-way of the directly useful. Nothing but another war, with all its besetting influences, could distract the public mind from the course it has now entered upon. Whether this be the result of peace and leisure, or an effect wrought by several leading minds, is of no consequence. It is enough to you clever people who write, that such is, and promises long to be, the bent of the national mind. Why, then, I would say, continue this vain scribbling of verses that nobody will read—why persist in studies that can be turned by no pen of the present day to any use—why break your heads upon walls that even battering-rams might be spent upon in vain? Turn ye away from all those empty sentimental essays that have hitherto engrossed so much of your attention, and open your eyes fully to the real nature of what the public now desires at your hands. A world cries at this moment for instruction—the whole earth lies like an unappropriated field before you. The few who have learned any thing, find that little of what they learned is of any use: the great majority have learned nothing. Apply yourselves immediately to the consideration of all the modern im-

proved methods of bettering the condition of mankind. Lose no time, after you have studied these, in doing what is in your power to disseminate and act upon them. Make moral objects the burden of every song—if song you write—the tenor of every narrative, the aim of every lesson. Exert every energy in trampling down the inferior propensities, or in showing how they are to be governed by the reason; and try every where to establish the supremacy of the intellectual faculties and the moral feelings. Talents, you will thus find, which were not sufficient to produce success in poetry, or other of the more ambitious paths of literature, will be adequate to give charms to information and science, and to gain for you, instead of no fame at all, the reputation of being respectable cultivators of the useful. You will have staked for a lower prize, but you will be the surer not to draw a blank.

It may perhaps appear strange that one of the humblest of all literary adventurers should presume to offer these advice to his brethren. It is, however, to be observed, that he aims chiefly at directing the numerous men, younger than himself, who, feeling within them tendencies and powers of which they hardly know either the nature or the extent, are at a loss for a Mentor to guide them to proper objects. He has had occasion to see much of this waste ability employed in rearing weeds where grain might have been sown; and it is a sight by no means gratifying. Books are published every day by such people, of which, in some instances, not one copy, or not more than one, is ever fairly sold. Essays, sketches, poems, innumerable, are daily offered by them to the conductors of periodical works, who find them altogether useless. Now, in almost every instance where an attempt is made in literature, there must be a certain degree of talent, and, unquestionably, of application; and why should all this talent and all this application go for nothing? Would it not be better for all concerned, if such persons were to confine their endeavours to something in which success was more certain, and where the result was surer to be beneficial?

#### AFRICAN TRAVELLING.

THE obstacles which interpose themselves to travellers in Africa, and the dreadful privations endured in that land of hunger and thirst, are nowhere detailed in a more unassuming manner than in the *Travels in Southern Africa* by Mr Thompson, who with difficulty procured the attendance of Hottentots in his exploratory journey. The following is a condensation of part of this traveller's interesting details:—

About an hour after we started, we fell in with a Bushman and his wife, returning from a hunting excursion. He had been successful, and was carrying on his back half of the carcass of a young gemsbok, which he had slain with his poisoned arrows. His wife was laden with the remainder, together with a little child which sat upon her shoulders, with its legs hanging over her bosom, and holding itself on by her matted hair. On questioning them about the probability of finding water on our route, the hunter, pointing to a certain part of the heavens, told us, that, if we rode hard, we should find water by the time the moon stood there. This indicated a distance of not less than fifty miles. Yet it was a consolation to know that we should find water even within that distance. Rewarding our informant with a bit of tobacco, we pushed on with redoubled speed.

Hour after hour succeeded till midnight was past, and still the moon had not reached the situation pointed out by the Bushman, while our horses were ready to sink under us at the rate we travelled. As we drew near the spot where we expected to find water, my guides, who usually kept a little ahead of me, requested me to ride in close file with them, because lions usually lay in ambush in such places, and were more apt to spring upon men when riding singly than in a clump together. We had scarcely adopted this precaution when we passed within thirty paces of one of those formidable animals. He gazed at us for a moment, and then lay down, couchant, while we passed on as fast as possible, not without looking frequently behind, with feelings of awe and apprehension. We soon after reached the bed of the Gamka (or Lion's) river, but found it at this place, to our sorrow, entirely dry. We were all ready to sink under the exertions we had this day made, and the thirst we had endured. Jacob, in particular, who was unwell, and had suffered much from the hard riding, repeatedly told us that he could hold out no longer, but wished to lie down and die. The dread, however, of being devoured by the lions, now acted on him as a spur to exertion; and Wittebooy and myself, knowing that our fate depended upon our getting water, continued to urge on our horses along the course of the river, most anxiously looking out for the pool the Bushman had told us of. In this way we proceeded until two o'clock in the

morning, and were almost despairing of success, when we at length discovered the promised pool, which, though thick with mud, and defiled by the dung and urine of the wild beasts, was, nevertheless, a most grateful relief to us and our horses. We had been up since two o'clock on the preceding morning, had been on horseback above sixteen hours, and had travelled in that time a distance of fully eighty miles, the last stage of about sixty entirely without stopping.

About sunset we crossed the channel of the Gamka, for the last time, our course now being almost due north towards the Hartbeest river, where we hoped to find water, and probably game. We proceeded at a very lagging pace, for some of our horses were lamed by the sharp flinty road, and the old one got fairly fagged; so that we were reluctantly obliged to leave him. About nine o'clock, after a tedious ride of nine hours, during which we had scarcely travelled thirty-five miles, we reached the bed of the Hartbeest river, at a place called "Camel's Mouth;" but, to our extreme chagrin, found it perfectly dry. We had no resource but to tie our horses to a tree; and having made a fire, we stretched ourselves beside it, and sought consolation in sleep. During the night we were disturbed by the hyenas, which came within a few yards, but did not venture to attack us. Our first care was to search for water, and we had the greatest satisfaction at discovering it at no great distance, in a pit about ten feet deep, recently dug by the natives. It was very brack, indeed, but proved nevertheless a most grateful relief to us. To assuage the cravings of hunger, our Hottentots gathered and ate a little gum from the mimosa tree. I also attempted to eat a small quantity, but could not swallow it.

Wittebooy then went out with his gun in search of game. Jacob followed to look after the horses, which had strayed to some distance in quest of pasture; and I staid behind to guard the baggage. While I sat here, musing in no very comfortable mood, two Korannas suddenly made their appearance, and without hesitation came and seated themselves beside me; they were miserable-looking beings, emaciated and lank, with the withered skin hanging in folds from their sides, while a belt, bound tight round each of their bodies, indicated that they were suffering, like myself, from long privation of food. I attempted to make them understand by signs that I was in want of provisions, and would gladly purchase some; but they only replied by shaking their heads, and pointing to the "girdles of famine" tied round their bellies; and I afterwards learned that they had been subsisting for many days entirely on gum.

In this situation, we sat together for upwards of two hours, until at length Wittebooy made his appearance, leading the old horse that we had left some miles behind the preceding night, but without any game. He immediately entered into conversation with the Korannas, but could learn from them only the details of their own miserable situation. On account of the long-continued drought, the wild game had almost entirely deserted this quarter of the country; the bulbs, also, had disappeared, and they were reduced to famine. Jacob soon after returning with the horses, we saddled up about nine o'clock, and left these poor Korannas and the "Camel's Mouth," filing away in a melancholy train down the dry channel of the river. After about an hour's ride, we came to a spot marked with the recent footprints of the natives, and, looking around us, we saw two human beings seated at a little distance under a mimosa. On approaching them, a picture of misery presented itself, such as my eyes had never before witnessed. Two Koranna women were sitting on the ground entirely naked; their eyes were fixed upon the earth, and when we addressed them, one of them muttered some words in reply, but looked not up at us. Their bodies were wasted by famine to mere skin and bone. One of them was far advanced in years; the other was rather a young woman, but a cripple. An infant lay in her arms, wasted like herself to a skeleton, which every now and then applied its little mouth alternately to the shrivelled breasts of its dying mother. Before them stood a wooden vessel, containing merely a few spoonfuls of muddy water. By degrees the Hottentots obtained for me an explanation of this melancholy scene. These three unfortunate beings had been thus left to perish by their relatives when famine pressed sore upon the horde, because they were helpless, and unable to provide for themselves. A pot of water had been left with them; and on this, and a little gum, they had been for a number of days eking out a miserable existence. It seemed wonderful that they had so long escaped falling a prey to the wild beasts; but it was evident that one or two days more of famine would be sufficient to release them from all their earthly sufferings.

From the long want of food, I now began to feel myself so weak, that I could with difficulty maintain an upright posture on horseback. The jolting of the horse seemed as if it would shake me to pieces. It struck me that I would try the method adopted by the famishing Korannas, and my own Hottentots, of tying a band tightly round the body. I unloosed my cravat, and employed it for this purpose, and had no sooner done so than I found great and immediate relief. At eight o'clock, finding ourselves quite exhausted, though we had not travelled to-day above twenty-five miles, we unsaddled at the bed of the river, tied our horses to a tree, and stretched ourselves on a bank of sand. Our rest, however, was but indifferent, disturbed by

\* I may mention one expressly and most successfully calculated for the purpose—D. Combe's "Principles of Physiology applied to Education," Edinburgh, 1834.

• The editors can vouch for this fact as one which has fallen under their personal observation. Of a poetical volume, published, or professing to be published, two years ago, by a respectable bookselling firm in Edinburgh, not one copy was sold. Of another, published by a different house, one copy was sold. And a nearly similar fact befell a series of tales published about ten years since.

cold, hunger, thirst, and the howling of wild beasts, and by frightful dreams, produced by all these afflictions combined.

At dawn of day we awoke again to the full sense of our distressed condition. Witteboey and I immediately proceeded to an adjoining height to look out for game. We could see none, but observed a party of Korannas at no great distance, to whom we immediately proceeded. There were about a dozen of them, young and old, and all in the same state of destitution as those we had last seen; they were subsisting principally upon gum, and had not a morsel of any food to give us. My poor Hottentots looked like moving ghosts. Their gaunt, hollow cheeks, and eyes sunk in the sockets, gave them a frightful aspect. I now proposed to kill one of the horses to supply our urgent wants, since the prospect of shooting game had become almost hopeless, and our fruitless search for it had almost worn us out. Witteboey, however, begged that I would permit him to make another attempt with his gun. I agreed; he then set off, accompanied by three or four of the Korannas, who were scarcely less anxious for his success than ourselves—hoping to come in for a share of what he might kill. Evening approached, and still the hunting party appeared not. At length, just as the sun was sinking under the horizon, we descried Witteboey and his Koranna followers returning, laden with flesh. A zebra had been shot, and each was carrying a piece of it for immediate consumption. Without questioning Witteboey how or where he killed the zebra, we all commenced roasting and eating. In a short time, I had picked several of his ribs. As for the Hottentots, I do not exaggerate, when I say, that each of them had devoured eight pounds of meat within an hour, and an additional allowance of three or four pounds more before they slept. The Korannas marched off in a body to the place where the zebra was shot, to feast upon the offals, and certain parts of the carcass which we had allotted them, on the condition of their keeping careful watch over the remainder, until we joined them in the morning. The sudden change in my Hottentots this evening, after their hunger was assuaged, was remarkable. Hope and happiness again reanimated them, and that haggard and horrid appearance which had invested their visages began to disappear. So voracious was their appetite, that I really became apprehensive they would kill themselves by repletion; and in the middle of the night, when I awoke, I again found them eating and smoking by turns.

We saddled at an early hour, and made the best of our way towards the Gariep, which we reached, to our great satisfaction, in about a couple of hours. After suffering so severely as we had done, from the want of water, what a glorious object did this river appear, flowing in a majestic stream, deep and rapid, and five hundred yards in breadth! We hurried down to the channel, and plunged our hands and faces into the cooling waters, and at length assuaged a thirst, which the briny wells of the Korannas seemed at every draught to increase. After all our privations, it was no slight satisfaction to me, to have so far accomplished one of the objects of my journey. I had reached the banks of the Gariep by a route never taken before by any traveller, and had been enabled to add to the map of South Africa, the distinctive features of the intermediate region, which, dreary and desolate though it be, is not without a strong interest in the eyes both of the naturalist and the philanthropist. The main and middle branch of the Gariep, which forms the cataract, traverses a sort of island of large extent, covered with rocks and thickets, and environed on all sides by streams of water. Having crossed the southern branch, which at this season is but an inconsiderable creek, we continued to follow the Korannas for several miles through the dense acacia forests, while the thundering sound of the cataract increased at every step. We reached a ridge of rocks, and found it necessary to dismount and follow our guides on foot. It seemed as if we were now entering the untrodden vestibule of one of nature's sublime temples, and the untutored savages who guided us, evinced, by the awe and circumspection with which they trod, that they were not altogether uninfluenced by the *genius loci*. At length we halted, and the next moment I was led to a projecting rock, where a scene burst upon me, far surpassing my most sanguine expectations. The whole water of the river being previously confined to a bed of scarcely one hundred feet in breadth, descends at once into a magnificent cascade of fully four hundred feet in height. As I gazed on this stupendous scene, I felt as if in a dream. The sublimity of nature drowned all apprehension of danger; and after a short pause, I hastily left the spot where I stood, to gain a nearer view from a cliff that more immediately impended over the foaming gulf. I had just reached this station, when I felt myself grasped all at once by four Korannas, who simultaneously seized hold of me by the arms and legs. My first impression was, that they were going to hurl me over the precipice; but it was a momentary thought, and it wronged the friendly savages. They are themselves a timid race; and they were alarmed lest my temerity should lead me into danger. They hurried me back from the brink, and then explained their motive, and asked my forgiveness. I was not ungrateful for their care, though somewhat annoyed by their officiousness.

The character of the whole of the surrounding scenery, full of rocks, caverns, and pathless woods,

and the desolate aspect of the Gariep mountains beyond, accorded well with the wild grandeur of the waterfall, and impressed me with feelings never to be effaced.

## HISTORICAL FAMILIES.

### ERSKINE.

THIS family—which has produced more men of talent than any other in Scotland—traces its descent from Henry de Erskine, who possessed the barony of that name on the Clyde, in the early part of the thirteenth century. The name of the family appears to have been taken from its estate—a circumstance that generally indicates high antiquity and honour, as it shows that the race had land before the era of the commencement of surnames. From Henry proceeded a race of knights of Erskine, who gradually accumulated other property, and the sixth of whom, Sir Robert, was great chamberlain of Scotland under David II. It was chiefly through the management of this high political personage, that the succession of the house of Stuart, in the person of Robert II., was brought about. He had the keeping of the three principal fortresses of the realm, Dumbarton, Stirling, and Edinburgh, and to his other property he added that of Alloa, which the king gave him in exchange for the hunting district of Strathgarny, in the Highlands. His grandson, Sir Robert Erskine, was one of the hostages for the ransom of James I., in 1424, being then worth a thousand merks per annum. On the death of Alexander Earl of Marr, in 1435, he claimed to succeed to that title, which has ever been esteemed the oldest in Scotland; but though his right by descent from Lady Elyne, daughter of Grately, the eleventh earl, was unquestionable, the same sovereign whom he had thus served kept him unjustly out of possession, on pretence that there were no living witnesses to prove his genealogy (a thing impossible in nature), while the real cause seems to have been the desire of the king to suppress the title, in pursuance of his favourite policy of weakening the aristocracy. Sir Thomas, the son of this knight, was made a peer of Parliament in 1467, under the title of Lord Erskine.

Notwithstanding the injustice of the successive Stuarts in excluding the Lords Erskine from the higher title and large estates to which they laid claim, no noble race in Scotland rendered more faithful service to the royal house, or were by that house more implicitly trusted. In consequence, probably, of their ancient privileges as keepers of the national fortresses, the Erskines were successively honoured for several generations with the duty of keeping the heirs-apparent of the crown. Alexander, the second Lord Erskine, had the custody of James IV., when Prince of Scotland, with whom he was ever after in high favour. John, the fourth lord, had the keeping of James V. during his minority. He subsequently was ambassador to procure a wife for this monarch, and lived long enough to witness his melancholy death at Falkland, and to undertake the mournful duty, in conjunction with Lord Livingstone, of protecting his infant daughter, the unfortunate Mary. Lord Erskine kept the young queen for some time in Stirling Castle, of which he was governor; but afterwards fearing that she might there be in some danger from the English, he transported her, first to the priory of Inchmahome, beautifully situated on an island in the lake of Monteith, and ultimately to France, where he committed her to the tutelage of her maternal relations. His eldest son, who was killed at Pinkie while only Master of Erskine, was the ancestor, by an illegitimate son, of the Erskines of Sheffield, near Dryburgh, of which the famous Ebenezer and Ralph Erskines, the originators of the Secession from the Church of Scotland, were cadets. A daughter of the same noble was mother, by King James V., of the celebrated Regent Moray.

The family attained its highest lustre in the next generation. John, fifth Lord Erskine, who succeeded to the title in 1552, was a nobleman of the most unsullied character, and a true lover of his country. Though a Protestant, he preserved a neutrality during the struggles between the reformed lords and the Queen Regent, Mary of Guise, to whom, when hard pressed by her enemies, he gave protection in the castle of Edinburgh, where she died in June 1560. Queen Mary, to whom he proved a faithful counsellor, at length granted him the title and estates, from which his ancestors had been so unjustly excluded; and, in 1565, he became Earl of Marr. The young queen next year put herself under his protection in Edinburgh Castle, when about to be delivered

of her son, afterwards James VI. The prince, immediately after his birth, was confided to the Earl of Marr, who conducted him to Stirling Castle, and was there able to defend him, in the ensuing year, from the machinations of Bothwell. When the Parliament subsequently crowned James at thirteen months old, they imposed upon Marr the onerous trust of keeping and educating the infant sovereign, while his wife, worthy Countess Annable, had what an old chronicler calls "the charge of his mouth." Buchanan at the same time became the tutor of the king, while the earl's eldest son John, though eight years older than James, became his chief and favourite companion. No family in the country could be happier, nor any household more modestly conducted, than that of the Earl of Marr in the romantic castle of Stirling, "with its fair park and table round"—where the young people daily pursued their sports, without any thought of those state cares which were afterwards to befall them. As a memorial of the familiarity which prevailed in the family, it is remembered by tradition that the king always called the young Lord Erskine "Jock the Slowan," or otherwise "Jocky o' Sclaitis" [or Slates]. The first title suggests to a Scottish imagination the character of a slobbering insatiable boy, but the second seems destined for ever to remain inexplicable. One thing is certain—that James never gave up the latter nickname, even when his youthful companion had become his grave and revered Lord Treasurer. On the death of the Earl of Lennox in the year 1571, the Earl of Marr was chosen Regent, an office attended with so much harassing care in that unquiet time, as to prove fatal to its possessor next year. Jock the Slowan succeeded his father at the early age of fourteen, and the king remained in Stirling under the charge of the brother of the late earl, Sir Alexander Erskine of Gogar. James's cradle and nursing-chair—two massive pieces of furniture, fashioned clumsily of black oak—are still preserved by the family.\*

After the king had undertaken the government, which, even in advanced life, he never conducted very efficiently, John, seventh Earl of Marr, for such was the style assumed by the king's schoolfellow, was too honest to accede to proceedings of which he could not but disapprove. He was one of the nobles who took possession of James's person at Ruthven in 1582, in order to separate him from his profligate counsellor Arran, and from the young Duke of Lennox. On the king regaining his freedom, and falling once more under the trammels of Arran, the Earl of Marr was one of those who fled to England, and it was not till the second and permanent overthrow of Arran in 1583, that he was restored to royal favour, and to the possession of his estates. He was ever after one of the most intimate friends and trusty counsellors of the king, who, in 1595, committed to him the charge of his son, Prince Henry, being the fifth generation of the royal family which had been entrusted to an Erskine. Not long after this, the earl, being a widower, fell desperately in love with Lady Mary Stuart, daughter of the Duke of Lennox, and the king's cousin, but who, seeing that his lordship was twice her age, and had already a son and heir, at first positively refused to take him. Though his lordship was arrived at those years when love is supposed to have no very powerful sway over the human heart, he pined like a lad of seventeen for this scornful beauty, and it was even supposed that his disappointed passion might have a fatal effect. The king, however, soon learned how matters stood, and, as we are informed by Lady Mary's descendant, the late Earl of Buchan, came to him and said, in his hearty way, "I say, Jock, ye sanna die for ony lass in a' the land." To make good his word, he set about the task of conciliating Lady Mary, which he ultimately effected, by a promise to ennoble her eldest son. Hence the peerage of Buchan.

The earl acted, in 1601, as ambassador to Queen Elizabeth, and to his excellent management is in part attributed the smooth accession of King James to the English throne. When the king proceeded in April 1603 to England, the Earl of Marr was one of the select few who accompanied him. He had to return, however, from York, in order to appease the queen, who had been enraged at finding that the countess had orders not to deliver Prince Henry to any one without an order under his own hand. Her majesty, it is said, never forgave this insult. The earl was made a knight of the garter, and in 1615 was appointed Lord Treasurer of Scotland, an office which he held till 1630. He died in 1634, aged seventy-seven.

John, seventh Earl of Marr, had eight sons and four daughters, whose descendants are now spread through a considerable proportion of the aristocratic genealogies in Scotland. From the eldest son, John, are descended the Earls of Marr; from the third, Henry, come the Earls of Buchan; from the fifth, Sir Charles Erskine of Alva, proceeded the two Lords Alva, who were successively Lords of Session in the last century, besides many other persons. One of the earl's unmarried sons was Sir Alexander Erskine, a man of remarkable elegance of person, and the hero of the beautifully mournful Scottish song, beginning—

"Baloo, my babe, lie still and sleep,  
It grieves me sair to hear thee weep!"

\* They are in the possession of Lady Charlotte Erskine, of Brunswick Street, Hillside, Edinburgh, who also possesses most of the family pictures.



the heroine of which was Anna Bothwell, daughter of Lord Holyroodhouse—the victim of an unfortunate passion. Sir Alexander was killed at the blowing-up of Dunglas House, in 1640, along with his brother-in-law, the second Earl of Haddington. All the Lord Treasurer's four daughters were married to earls; and these earls were Marischal, Rothes, Kinghorn, and Haddington.

Long before this period, the family had sent off several noble shoots. A younger son of Sir Thomas Erskine of Erskine acquired the lands of Dun, in Forfarshire, in 1393, and became the ancestor of the Erskines, Barons of Dun, of whom one was the second layman in the business of the Scottish Reformation, and afterwards appointed superintendent of Angus, while a later possessor of the estate was a distinguished senator of the College of Justice, and author of an approved moral treatise, usually called *Lord Dun's Advice*. Sir Alexander Erskine of Gogar, already mentioned, and who was a younger brother of the Regent Marr, became the ancestor of the Earls of Kellie, a title which has recently fallen, by failure of other heirs, to the Earls of Marr. The title of Earl of Kellie was granted by King James in 1619 to the son of this gentleman, who had been the king's schoolfellow, and had rescued James from the hands of Alexander Ruthven, the conspirator, whom he slew by a single stroke of his sword. Alexander, fifth Earl of Kellie, was a man of lively fancy, though it was generally thought of small understanding; and he had very nearly lost his title and estates by joining the standard of Prince Charles in 1746. He brought new talent into the family, by marrying a daughter of Dr Pitcairne, the celebrated Jacobite physician and poet; of which marriage the eldest son was the well-known musical composer, who died in 1781, and the third, the Honourable Andrew Erskine, whose *vers de société* and witty conversation are still traditionally remembered in Scotland.

But by far the most distinguished branch of the Erskine family is that which bears the Buchan peerage—a race which has perhaps produced as many notable men as the main stock, with all its longer endurance. Overlooking details, Henry, the second son of the Lord Treasurer by Lady Mary Stuart, was destined to inherit the lordship of Cardross from his father, but, predeceasing him, left the succession open to his son David. David, who thus became, on his grandfather's death in 1634, second Lord Cardross, was one of an honourable minority of Scottish peers who protested against the surrender of Charles I. to the English Parliament. His eldest son, Henry, third Lord Cardross, is endeared to every patriotic mind, by his heroic sufferings for non-conformity under the government of the latter Stuarts; while a younger son, Colonel John Erskine of Carnock, was the father of the well-known author of the "Institutes of the Law of Scotland," and the grandfather of the late Dr John Erskine, minister of Greyfriars, Edinburgh—the colleague of Robertson, and the leader of the zealous party in the General Assembly for the better part of half a century. The fourth Lord Cardross, in 1698, inherited the earldom of Buchan from a cousin, a senior branch of the family of the Lord Treasurer, which had obtained the title by marriage. The whole of this line was Whiggish in the last degree, till the next succeeding earl, Henry, the father of the late earl, and of his two more noted brothers. Earl Henry was a man of infinite good nature and polite manners, but ordinary understanding. Forgetting the principles for which his grandfather had suffered, he formed the wish, in 1745, to be introduced to the Young Chevalier. Being at the same time irresolute as to joining the standard of rebellion, he, along with his brother-in-law, the celebrated Sir James Steuart of Coltness, requested their friend Lord Elcho, who was Sir James's brother-in-law, to take them, as it were, upon compulsion, to the court at Holyroodhouse. Next day, therefore, according to concert, they were seized at the Cross of Edinburgh, by a party under the command of Elcho, and straightway brought into an antechamber in the palace. The prince, however, on the affair being explained to him, refused to see them, unless as avowed adherents. Strange to say, the profound Sir James gave way to the scruples of the young adventurer, was introduced—and ruined; while his plain-minded friend, with a low and sarcastic obeisance to Lord Elcho, turned upon his heel, and departed. The earl thus saved his estates from confiscation; but, unfortunately, it was only to squander much of their value in another way. At his death in 1767, he left his children little better inheritance than their talents, for which, perhaps, they were more indebted to their mother, Agnes Steuart, than to him. Lady Buchan was granddaughter of the famous *Jamie Wylie*, as he was characteristically styled—namely, Sir James Steuart, Lord Advocate to King William and Queen Anne, and who had been concerned, when an exile in Holland, in drawing up the manifesto of the Prince of Orange. The eldest son, David Steuart, was the late eccentric Earl of Buchan—a man whose natural and acquired gifts would have made a better impression upon the world if they had not been betrayed by his eccentricities. One thing must be stated in his favour, that the narrowness in pecuniary matters, which sometimes raised a smile at his own expense, might be traced to honourable habits of economy in early life, imposed for the purpose of making his slender revenues serve for the education and provision of his two younger brothers. The elder of these bro-

thers was the celebrated Henry Erskine, described by Sir Walter Scott as the wittiest and the best-humoured man living, and the father of the present Earl of Buchan. The junior was the still more eminent Thomas Erskine, whose talents raised him to the situation of Lord Chancellor under the Grenville administration. Of the present house of Buchan, nothing can be said.

To return to the main line of the family: John, the eighth Earl of Marr, who succeeded the Lord Treasurer, distinguished himself by his loyalty to Charles I., and lost much by the civil wars. His son, John, the ninth earl, who succeeded him in 1654, had also been a royalist, and was so completely broken down by the sequestrations and ruinous fines imposed by Cromwell, that he lived till the Restoration in a cottage at the gate of what had been his own mansion, Alloa House. To add to the misfortunes of this nobleman, he was struck with blindness: in his portrait he is a fair-haired mild-looking old man. Though restored to the estates by King Charles II., the family never altogether recovered the exhaustion of resources produced by the civil war. An Earl Charles—who, in 1679, raised the regiment called the Royal Scots Fusiliers, now the 21st—intervened between this earl and the Earl John who so unhappily distinguished himself by heading the insurrection of 1715.

The latter was a man of abilities and address, but tainted by that instability of principle which is so apt to beset leading men in an age liable to frequent changes of dynasty and of government. He also acted under the compelling influence of poverty, which has its victims among the high as well as the low. After an active political life, he became one of the British Secretaries of State in the Tory administration of Queen Anne; and, accordingly, though willing to yield faithful service to King George, he was turned off by that sovereign at his accession, along with Harley, Bolingbroke, and every other member of that mistrusted cabinet. Soured by this treatment, he rashly raised the Scottish Jacobites, on behalf of the Pretender, and opened a campaign which ended in his own proscription and exile, and the ruin of about two hundred of the best families in the country. The unfortunate earl [he had been created duke by the Pretender] spent most of the remainder of his life in studious retirement at Paris. Casting his active mind forward upon the future, he devised the plan of a canal for connecting the Firths of Forth and Clyde, and schemed a new town on the fields to the north of Edinburgh; two ideas, which the next fifty years saw realised. He died in 1732.

In 1824, Mr John Francis Erskine, grandson of the insurgent earl by his mother, and grand-nephew by his father, and whose paternal grandfather, Lord Grange, had purchased back the forfeited estate of Alloa, was restored to the peerage, by virtue of a gracious act of George IV., which gave back several other attained titles, and communicated, it may be said, a joyful feeling all over Scotland. This ancient and truly historical house is now represented by John Francis Miller Erskine, Earl of Marr, grandson to the venerable nobleman just mentioned.

#### NIGHT.

Soul-soothing season! period of repose,  
Or introverted thought, which day debars;  
Can language paint, can poetry disclose,  
The magic of thy silence, dews, and Stars?  
When the loud mirth of day no longer mars  
Our better feelings with its empty sound;  
When we forget awhile the cruel jars  
Our souls in worldly intercourse have found,  
How welcome are thy shades, with peaceful quiet crowned!

They gather round us, from their silent wings  
Scattering kind blessings; to the wretched, dear.  
Prosperity to gaudy daylight clings,  
But thou art Sorrow's chosen, meek compeer:  
Thou biddest her from the cold and heartless sneer  
Of wealth's sleek minions, pride's contemptuous crew;  
Hushest her sigh, concealst her bitter tear,  
And in thy healing influence, dost renew  
Her fortitude to bear—her courage to subdue.

And if thou didst not this, there is in thee  
Yet ample scope for Poetry's fair themes:  
For thou, O Night! art guardian of the key  
That opens the portal of the land of dreams.  
Touched by thy spell our roving fancy teems  
With things to which Day has no parallel:  
Beings too beauteous far to brave its beams,  
Much too ethereal upon earth to dwell;  
And glories, dreams alone render accessible.

Waving, however, these thy wilder flights,  
As joys ideal, unsubstantial, vain;  
And passing o'er thy soothing calm delights  
Administered to Sorrow's pallid train:  
Enough is left to bid us bless thy reign;  
For thy reviving periods health renew  
Unto our wearied nature; flush again  
Beauty's wan cheek, curtain her eye of blue,  
Or with fresh splendours fill its orb of darker hue.

One topic more, still Night! will yet intrude  
Upon my serious thought while hymning thee:—  
Thou art the emblem, type, similitude,  
Of silence yet more awful; although we  
Are loath the approach of death's dark night to see!  
Father of Mercies! Thou whose goodness gave  
Thy Son Beloved, man's sacrifice to be,  
Grant that in life's last hour my soul may crave,  
Nor crave in vain, His love to light me through the grave.

BARTON.

#### RAMBLES OF A NATURALIST.

[By Dr Goodman, of Philadelphia.]

##### CRABS.

CRABS are curious animals. Though confined in hard shells, and so carrying their skeleton on the outside, that circumstance does not render them less alert in their movements, or quick in their apprehensions. Who would expect an animal so low in the scale of creation as a crab, to be furnished with ten or twelve pair of jaws to its mouth? Yet such is the fact; and all these variously constructed pieces are provided with appropriate muscles, and move in a manner which can scarcely be explained, though it may be very readily comprehended when once observed in living nature. But after all the complexity of the jaws, where would an inexperienced person look for their teeth? surely not in the stomach? Nevertheless, such is their situation; and these are not mere appendages, that are called teeth by courtesy, but stout regular grinding teeth, with a light brown surface. They are not only within the stomach, but fixed to a cartilage nearest to its lower extremity, so that the food, unlike that of other creatures, is submitted to the action of the teeth as it is passing from the stomach, instead of being chewed before it is swallowed. In some species the teeth are five in number; but throughout this class of animals the same general principle of construction may be observed. Crabs and their kindred have no brain, because they are not required to reason upon what they observe; they have a nervous system excellently suited to their mode of life, and its knots or ganglia send out nerves to the organs of sense, digestion, motion, &c. The senses of these beings are very acute, especially their sight, hearing, and smell. Most of my readers have heard of crabs' eyes, or have seen these organs in the animal on the end of two little projecting knobs, above and on each side of the mouth; few of them, however, have seen the crab's ear; yet it is very easily found, and is a little triangular bump placed near the base of the feelers. This bump has a membrane stretched over it, and communicates with a small cavity, which is the internal ear. The organ of smell is not so easily demonstrated as that of hearing, though the evidence of their possessing the sense to an acute degree is readily attainable.

My observations upon the crustaceous animals have extended through many years, and in very various situations; and for the sake of making the general view of their qualities more satisfactory, I will go on to state what I remarked of some of the genera and species in the West Indies, where they are exceedingly numerous and various. The greater proportion of the genera feed on animal matter, especially after decomposition has begun; a large number are exclusively confined to the deep waters, and approach the shoals and lands only during the spawning season. Many live in the sea, but daily pass many hours upon the rocky shores for the pleasure of basking in the sun; others live in marshy or moist ground, at a considerable distance from the water, and feed principally on vegetable food, especially the sugar cane, of which they are extremely destructive. Others again reside habitually on the hills or mountains, and visit the sea only once a-year, for the purpose of depositing their eggs in the sand. All those which reside in burrows made in moist ground, and those coming daily on the rocks to bask in the sun, participate in about an equal degree in the qualities of vigilance and swiftness. Many a breathless race have I run in vain, attempting to intercept them, and prevent their escaping into the sea. Many an hour of cautious and solicitous endeavour to steal upon them unobserved, has been frustrated by their long-sighted watchfulness; and several times, when, by extreme care and cunning approaches, I have actually succeeded in getting between a fine specimen and the sea, and had full hope of driving him farther inland, have all my anticipations been ruined by the wonderful swiftness of their flight, or the surprising facility with which they would dart off in the very opposite direction, at the very moment I felt almost sure of my prize.

The fleet-running crab (*Cypoda pugilator*), mentioned as living in burrows dug in a moist soil, and preying chiefly on the sugar cane, is justly regarded as one of the most noxious pests that can infest a plantation. Their burrows extend to a great depth, and run in various directions; they are also, like those of our fiddlers, nearly full of muddy water; so that, when these marauders once plump into their dens, they must be considered as entirely beyond pursuit. They are so numerous, and they multiply in such numbers, as in some seasons to destroy a large proportion of a sugar crop, and sometimes their ravages, combined with those of the rats and other plunderers, are absolutely ruinous to the sea-side planters. I was shown, by the superintendent of a place thus infested, a great quantity of cane utterly killed by these creatures, which cut it off in a peculiar manner, in order to suck the juice; and he assured me that, during that season, the crop would be two-thirds less than its average, solely owing to the inroads of the crabs and rats, which, if possible, are still more numerous. It was to me an irresistible source of amusement to observe the air of spite and vexation with which he spoke of the crabs; the rats he could shoot, poison, or drive off for

a time with dogs. But the crabs would not eat his poison while sugar cane was growing; the dogs could only chase them into their holes; and if, in helpless irritation, he sometimes fired his gun at a cluster of them, the shot only rattled over their shells like hail against a window. It is truly desirable that some summary mode of lessening their number could be devised, and it is probable that this will be best effected by poison, as it may be possible to obtain a bait sufficiently attractive to ensnare them. Species of this genus are found in various parts of our country, more especially towards the south. About Cape May, our friends may have excellent opportunities of testing the truth of what is said of their swiftness and vigilance.

The land crab, which is common to many of the West India islands, is more generally known as the Jamaica crab, because it has been most frequently described from observation in that island. Wherever found, they have all the habit of living, during great part of the year, in the highlands, where they pass the daytime concealed in huts, cavities, and under stones, and come out at night for their food. They are remarkable for collecting in vast bodies, and marching annually to the sea-side, in order to deposit their eggs in the sand; and this accomplished, they return to their former abodes, if undisturbed. They commence their march in the night, and move in the most direct line towards the destined point. So obstinately do they pursue this route, that they will not turn out of it for any obstacle that can possibly be surmounted. During the daytime, they skulk and lie hid as closely as possible, but thousands upon thousands of them are taken for the use of the table by whites and blacks, as on their seaward march they are very fat and of fine flavour. On the homeward journey, those that have escaped capture are weak, exhausted, and unfit for use. Before dismissing the crabs, I must mention one which was a source of much annoyance to me at first, and of considerable interest afterwards, from the observation of its habits. At that time I resided in a house situated about two hundred yards from the sea, fronting the setting sun, having in clear weather the lofty mountains of Porto Rico in view, distant about eighty miles. Like most of the houses in the island, ours had seen better days, as was evident from various breaks in the floors, angles rotted off the doors, sunken sills, and other indications of decay. Our sleeping room, which was on the lower floor, was especially in this condition; but as the weather was delightfully warm, a few cracks and openings, though rather large, did not threaten much inconvenience. Our bed was provided with that indispensable accompaniment, a mosquito bar or curtain, to which we were indebted for escape from various annoyances. Scarcely had we extinguished the light, and composed ourselves to rest, than we heard, in various parts of the room, the most startling noises. It appeared as if numerous hard and heavy bodies were trailed along the floor; then they sounded as if climbing up by the chairs and other furniture, and frequently something like a large stone would tumble down from such elevations with a loud noise, followed by a peculiar chirping noise. What an effect this produced upon entirely inexperienced strangers, may well be imagined by those who have been suddenly waked up in the dark, by some unaccountable noise in the room. Finally, these invaders began to ascend the bed; but happily the mosquito bar was securely tucked under the bed all around, and they were denied access, though their efforts and tumblings to the floor produced no very comfortable reflections. Towards daylight they began to retire, and in the morning no trace of any such visitants could be perceived. On mentioning our troubles, we were told that this nocturnal disturber was only Bernard the Hermit, called generally the soldier crab, perhaps from the peculiar habit he has of protecting his body by thrusting it into an empty shell, which he afterwards carries about, until he outgrows it, when it is relinquished for a larger. Not choosing to pass another night quite so noisily, due care was taken to exclude Monsieur Bernard, whose knockings were thenceforward confined to the outside of the house. I baited a large wire rat-trap with some corn meal, and placed it outside of the back door, and in the morning found it literally half filled with these crabs, from the largest sized shell that could enter the trap, down to such as were not larger than a hickory nut. Here was a fine collection made at once, affording a very considerable variety in the size and age of the specimens, and the different shells into which they had introduced themselves.

The soldier, or hermit crab, when withdrawn from his adopted shell, presents about the head and claws a considerable family resemblance to the lobster. The claws, however, are very short and broad, and the body covered with hard shell only in that part which is liable to be exposed or protruded. The posterior or abdominal part of the body is covered only by a tough skin, and tapers towards a small extremity, furnished with a sort of book-like apparatus, enabling it to hold on to its facitious dwelling. Along the surface of its abdomen, as well as on the back, there are small projections, apparently intended for the same purpose. When once fairly in possession of a shell, it would be quite a difficult matter to pull the crab out, though a very little heat applied to the shell will quickly induce him to leave it. The shells they select are taken solely with reference to their suitability, and hence you

may catch a considerable number of the same species, each of which is in a different species or genus of shell. The shells commonly used by them, when of larger size, are those of the whilk, which are much used as an article of food by the islanders, or the smaller conch (strombus) shells. The very young hermit crabs are found in almost every variety of small shell found on the shores of the Antilles. I have frequently been amused by ladies eagerly engaged in making collections of these beautiful little shells, and not dreaming of their being tenanted by a living animal, suddenly startled, on displaying their acquisitions, by observing them to be actively endeavouring to escape; or on introducing the hand into the reticule to produce a particularly fine specimen, to receive a smart pinch from the claws of the little hermit. The aquatic soldiers may be seen towing along shells of most disproportionate size; but their relatives, who travel over the hills by moonlight, know that all unnecessary encumbrance of weight should be avoided. They are as pugnacious and spiteful as any of the crustaceous class; and when taken, or when they fall and jar themselves considerably, utter a chirping noise, which is evidently an angry expression. They are ever ready to bite with their claws, and the pinch of the larger individuals is quite painful. It is said that when they are changing their shells for the sake of obtaining more commodious coverings, they frequently fight for possession, which may be true where two that have forsaken their old shells meet, or happen to make choice of the same vacant habitation.

#### HIGH-FLOWN PHRASEOLOGY.

AMONGST all the improvements of the age, none perhaps are more striking than those which have recently been made, and indeed are at present making, in the language of ordinary life. Who, in these days, ever reads of boarding-schools? Nobody. They are transformed into academies for boys, and seminaries for girls: the higher classes are "Establishments." A coachmaker's shop is a "Repository for Carriages;" a milliner's shop a "Depôt;" a thread-seller's an "Emporium." One buys drugs at a "Medical Hall;" wines, of a "Company;" and shoes at a "Mart." Blacking is dispensed from an "Institution;" and meat from a "Purveyor." One would imagine that the word *shop* had become not only contemptible, but had been discovered not to belong to the English language. Now-a-days, all the shops are "Warehouses," or "places of business," and you will hardly find a tradesman having the honest hardihood to call himself a shopkeeper. There is now also no such word as that of *tailor*, that is to say, among ears polite; "clothing" has been discovered to be more elegant, although for our part the term *tailor* is every bit as respectable. This new mode of paraphrasing the language of ordinary life, however ridiculous it may in some instances be, is not half so absurd as the newspaper fashion of using high-flown terms in speaking of very commonplace occurrences. For instance, instead of reading that after a ball the company did not go away till daylight, we are told that the joyous group continued tripping on the light fantastic toe until Sol gave them warning to depart. If one of the company happened on his way to tumble into a ditch, we should be informed that "his foot slipped, and he was immersed in the liquid element." A good supper is described as making "the tables groan with every delicacy of the season." A crowd of briefless lawyers, unbefriended clergymen, and half-pay officers, are enumerated as a "host of fashion" at a watering-place, where we are also informed that ladies, instead of taking a dip before breakfast, "plunge themselves fearlessly into the bosom of Neptune." A sheep killed by lightning is a thing unheard of; the animal may be destroyed by the "electric fluid;" but, even then, we should not be told that it was dead: we should be informed that "the vital spark had fled for ever." If the carcass were picked up by a carpenter or shoemaker, we never should hear that a journeyman tradesman had found it; we should be told that its remains had been discovered by an "operative artisan." All little girls, be their faces ever so plain, pitted, or pitiable, if they appear at a public office to complain of robbery or ill-treatment, are invariably "intelligent and interesting." If they have proceeded very far in crime, they are called "unfortunate females." Child-murder is elegantly termed "infanticide;" and when it is punished capitally, we hear, not that the unnatural mother was hanged, but that "the unfortunate culprit underwent the last sentence of the law, and was launched into eternity." No person reads in the newspapers that a house has been burned down—he perhaps will find "that the house fell a sacrifice to the flames." In an account of a launch, we learn, not that the ship went off the slip without any accident, but that "she glided securely and majestically into her native element;" the said native element being one in which the said ship never was before. To send for a surgeon, if one's leg be broke, is out of the question; a man indeed "may be dispatched for medical aid." There are now no public singers at tavern dinners; they are "the professional gentlemen;" and actors are called "professors of the histrionic art." Widows are scarce; they are all "interesting relicts;" and as for nursery-maids, they are now-a-days universally transformed into "young persons who superintend the junior branches of the family."—*Anonymous.*

#### LETTER

FROM A PARISH CLERK IN BARBADOES, TO ONE IN HAMPSHIRE.

MY DEAR JEDIDIAH—Here I am safe and sound—well in body, and in fine voice for my calling—though thousands and thousands of miles, I may say, from the old living Threap-Cum-Toddle. Little did I think to be ever giving out the Psalms across the Atlantic, or to be walking in the streets of Barbadoes, surrounded by Blackamoors, big and little; some crying after me, "There him go—look at Massa Amen!" Poor African wretches! I hope, by my Lord Bishop's assistance, to instruct many of them, and to teach them to have more respect for ecclesiastic dignitaries.

Through a ludicrous clerical mischance, not fit for me to mention, we have preached but once since our arrival. Oh! Jedidiah, how different from the row of comely, sleek, and ruddy plain English faces, that used to confront me in the churchwardens' pew, at the old service in Hants—Mr Perryman's clean shining, bald head; Mr Truman's respectable powdered, and Mr Cutlet's comely and well-combed caxon. Here, such a set of grinning sooty faces, that if I had been in any other place, I might have fancied myself at a meeting of master chimney-sweeps on May-day. You know, Jedidiah, how strange thoughts and things will haunt the mind, in spite of one's self, at times the least appropriate:—the line that follows "the rose is red, the violet's blue," in the old valentine, I am ashamed to say, came across me I know not how often. Then after service, no sitting on a tombstone for a cheerful bit of chat with a neighbour—no invitation to dinner from the worshipful churchwardens. The jabber of these Niggers is so outlandish or unintelligible, I can hardly say I am on speaking terms with any of our parishioners, except Mr Pompey, the governor's black, whose trips to England have made his English not quite so full of Greek as the others. There is one thing, however, that is so great a disappointment of my hopes and enjoyments, that I think if I had foreseen it, I should not have come out even at the Bishop's request. The song in the play-book says, you know, "While all Barbadoes bells do ring,"—but alas, Jedidiah, there is not a ring of bells in the whole island!—You who remember my fondness for that melodious pastime, indeed I may say my passion, for a Grandsire Peal of Triple Bob. Majors truly pulled and the changes called by myself, as when I belonged to the Great Tom Society of Hampshire Youths—may conceive my regret that, instead of coming here, I did not go out to Swan River—I am told they have a Peal there.

I shall write a longer letter by the Nestor, Bird, which is the next ship. This comes by the Lively, Kidd—only to inform you that I arrived here safe and well. Pray communicate the same, with my love and duty, to my dear parents and relations, not forgetting Deborah and Darius at Pokington, and Uriah at Pigstead. The same to Mrs Pugh, the opener—Mr Sexton, and the rest of my clerical friends. I have no commissions at present, except if an opportunity should offer of mentioning in any quarter that might reach administration, the destitute state of our Barbadian steeples and belfries, pray don't omit; and if, in the meantime, you could send out even a set of small hand-bells, it might prove a parochial acquisition as well as to me.—Dear Jedidiah, your friend and fellow clerk, Habakkuk Crumpe.—*Hood's Comic Annual.*

#### IMPUDENCE OF A THIEF.

The grandfather of the present Earl of Balcarras was a benevolent man, with more of what the French call *bonhomie* than most men, as the following fact will show. His lordship was a skilful agriculturist, and, among other fruits of his skill, he was particularly proud of a field of turnips, which were of unusual size. One day his lordship was walking in this field, and admiring its produce, when he discerned, close to the hedge, a woman, who was a pensioner of the family, but who, forgetting her duty and obligations, had stolen a large sackful of the precious turnips, and was making the best of her way home, when she was thus caught in the manner, as the lawyers say. The worthy nobleman very justly reproached the woman with her dishonesty and ingratitude, reminding her that she would have received a sackful of turnips had she asked for it in a proper way, instead of stealing his favourites. The woman silently curtsied at every sentence, and confessed her offence, but pleaded her large family. The good man was at last mollified, and was leaving the field, when the woman, who had dropped her prize on his lordship's first accosting her, and was now with difficulty endeavouring to lift it on her back again, called to him, "O, my lord, do ye gie me a haund, and help the poke on my pack, for it's unco heavy, and I cannot get it up by myself!" Thus bespoke the earl, who actually turned back, and did assist the woman to load herself with the stolen turnips!

EDINBURGH: Published, weekly, by W. and R. CHAMBERS, 19, Waterloo Place; ORR & SMITH, PATERNOSTER-ROW, London; and YOUNG AND CUNNINGHAM, Dublin. Agent in Glasgow, JOHN MACLEOD, 20, Argyle Street; and sold by all other Booksellers in Great Britain and Ireland.—Chambers's Historical Newspaper, a Supplement to the present publication, is published on the first of every month; and "Chambers's Information for the People," of which every number is a distinct branch of human knowledge, appears once every fortnight.—Subscribers in Edinburgh may have these papers left at their houses as they appear, by giving their addresses at 19, Waterloo Place, and paying subscriptions for a quarter, a half year, or a year, in advance.—Price of a quarter of the Journal, 1s. 6d. From the Steam-press of W. and R. Chambers.